



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge

*Draft Comprehensive  
Conservation Plan and  
Environmental Assessment*

*February 2008*



*Cover Pictures:* *Walkill River*  
Edward Henry/USFWS

*Red-tail hawk*  
Edward Henry/USFWS

*Refuge visitors enjoy wildlife observation*  
Fran Stephenson/USFWS

*Bog turtle*  
Kevin Holcomb/USFWS



*This goose, designed by J.N. "Ding" Darling, has become the symbol of the National Wildlife Refuge System.*

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting, and enhancing fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million acre National Wildlife Refuge System comprised of more than 545 national wildlife refuges and thousands of waterfowl production areas. It also operates 65 national fish hatcheries and 78 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces Federal wildlife laws, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, administers the Endangered Species Act, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance Program which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state wildlife agencies.

Comprehensive Conservation Plans provide long term guidance for management decisions and set forth goals, objectives, and strategies needed to accomplish refuge purposes and identify the Service's best estimate of future needs. These plans detail program planning levels that are sometimes substantially above current budget allocations and, as such, are primarily for Service strategic planning and program prioritization purposes. The plans do not constitute a commitment for staffing increases, operational and maintenance increases, or funding for future land acquisition.